

Message Text

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ACTION HA-05

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 IO-13 ISO-00 AID-05 OMB-01 TRSE-00

IGA-02 SS-15 SP-02 L-03 H-01 NSC-05 CIAE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5234

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C O N F I D E N T I A L NAIROBI 2677

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF, UG, KE

SUBJECT: UGANDAN REFUGEES IN KENYA

REF: STATE 036656; GENEVA 2197

1. CURRENT REFUGEE PROGRAM BESET WITH NUMEROUS PROBLEMS BUT APPEARS TO BE MOVING TOWARD DURABLE SOLUTIONS WITH REASONABLE SPEED. AS OF 1 FEB TOTAL NUMBER OF UGANDANS(INCLUDING DEPENDENTS) REGISTERED AS REFUGEES IN KENYA WAS 3,972. RATE OF INFLUX HAS BEEN STABLE FOR SOME MONTHS AT 8-10 CASES PER WEEK.

2. REFUGEE RECEPTION CENTER, ALREADY UNDER CONSTRUCTION, DUE TO OPEN IN FOUR OR FIVE MONTHS. IT WILL HAVE CAPACITY FOR SHORT-TERM HOUSING OF 150 PERSONS.

3. UNHCR REP EXPRESSES HIMSELF SATISFIED BY GOK COOPERATION, BOTH IN DONATING 20-ACRE TRACT FOR RECEPTION CENTER NEAR NAIROBI AND IN MOVING AHEAD WITH PLANS TO DONATE SUBSTANTIAL LAND FOR RESETTLEMENT PROJECT. MICHAEL NJENGA, DEPUTY PERMANENT SECRETARY IN OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT, HAS PROPOSED MULTI-THOUSAND-ACRE TRACT OF "GOOD MARGINAL" LAND ROUGHLY MID-WAY BETWEEN NAIROBI AND MOMBASA.
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HIGH-LEVEL VISIT TO SITE BY NJENGA, UNHCR REP, AND MINISTRY OFFICIAL WILL TAKE PLACE WITHIN ONE MONTH AND FINAL AGREEMENT COULD BE REACHED SHORTLY THEREAFTER. PREPARATION OF LAND FOR SETTLEMENT, HOWEVER, MAY TAKE CONSIDERABLE TIME AND MONEY IF SITE INSPECTION DISCLOSES NEED FOR INTRODUCTION OF IRRIGATION. UNHCR REP EMPHATICALLY REJECTS CONTENTION THAT GOK HAS DRAGGED ITS FEET ON

RESETTLEMENT OR THAT DELAYS HAVE BEEN POLITICALLY MOTIVATED.

4. ROUGHLY HALF OF 470 REFUGEES REGISTERED AS PRIMARY AND LOWER SECONDARY STUDENTS HAVE FOUND PLACES IN SCHOOL. CATHOLIC SECRETARIAT ADMINISTERS PROGRAM WITH FUNDS PROVIDED BY UNHCR. PROBLEM IS FINDING SHCOOLS WHICH HAVE PLACES AVAILABLE. APPARENTLY BECAUSE OF LACK OF ADQUATE STAFF, REFUGEE PARENTS ARE EXPECTED TO LOCATE PLACES FOR PRIMARY CHILDREN. AT UPPER SECONDARY LEVEL (FORMS V AND VI) THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY 50 STUDENTS REGISTERED, OF WHOM ONLY 12 ARE IN SCHOOL. AT UNIVERSITY LEVEL, THERE ARE 88 REGISTERED STUDENTS, OF WHOM 46 HAVE FOUND PLACES--32 AT UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI, 4 IN ZAMBIA, AND 10 IN WEST AFRICA. UNHCR REQUIRED TO PAY TUITION OF APPROXIMATELY 40,000 KENYA SHILLINGS (U.S. \$5,000) FOR EACH STUDENT, AND THIS FEE DOES APPEAR TO REPRESENT FAIRLY THE UNIVERSITY'S COSTS.

5. NAIROBI UNIVERSITY HAS BEEN OBLIGED THIS YEAR TO TURN DOWN FULLY HALF THE APPLICANTS QUALIFIED TO ENTER. SITUATION IS SIMILAR BUT NOT QUITE AS DRASTIC AT SECONDARY LEVEL. EMBASSY BELIEVES IT WOULD BE UNREASONABLE TO EXPECT KENYA TO DISCRIMINATE IN FAVOR OF UGANDAN STUDENTS OVER EQUALLY QUALIFIED KENYANS APPLICANTS.

6. "BOTSWANA MODEL" MAY HAVE SECONDARY VOCANTIONAL-TECH-
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NICAL INSTITUTIONS REGARDING SUCH EXPANSION-ADMISSION TRADE-OFF, AND RESPONSE HAS BEEN ENCOURAGINGN. NO APPROACH HAS BEEN MADE TO UNIVERSITY ON THIS. UNHCR REP SAYS UNHCR GENEVA ACCEPTS IDEA IN PRINCIPLE, AND EMBASSY BELIEVES IDEA IS WORTH FURTHER EXPLORATION.

7. STIPEND AS DESCRIBED PARA 2 REFTEL B IS INADEQUATE FOR SINGLE PERSON. FAMILY STIPEND, HOWEVER, IS EQUAL TO KENYA MINIMUM WAGE. RAISING FAMILY STIPEND AGOVE MINIMUM WAGE WOULD UNNECESSARILY IRRITATE POLITICAL SENSITIVITIES IN GOK. IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO RAISE INDIVIDUAL STPEND, IF FUNDING IS AVAILABLE, BUT UNHCR REP FEELS THIS SHOULD NOT BE DONE UNTIL PERMANENT ARRANGEMENTS ARE MADE TO ASSURE "DOLE"SYSTEM WILL BE TEMPORARY RATHER THAN PERMANENT EXPEDIENT.

8. JOINT REGUEE SERVICES OF KENYA (JRSK) IS EXTREMELY INEFFICIENT(ALTHOUGH IT WOULD BE MORE DIFFICULT OT ESTABLISH OUTRIGHT CORRUPTION) AND IS INCREASINGLY UNSUITABLE AS VEHICLE FOR SERVICE DELIVERY OR FUNDING. JRSK COUNSELLING IS TOTAL INADEQUATE. THERE IS NO REASON WHY UNHCR CANNOT, IF NECESSARY, WORK DIRECTLY

WITH INDIVIDUAL AGENCIES RATHER THAN THROUGH JRSK
UMBRELLA. IT WAS COMPLETELY BYPASSED, FOR EXAMPLE,
ON RECEPTION CENTER.

9. IN SUMMARY, EDUCATION AND COUNSELLING APPEAR TO BE
MAIN AREAS WHERE SERVICEES ARE NOT MOVING TOWARD SATIS-
FACTORY LEVEL. RECEPTION CENTER WILL HANDLE SHORT-TERM
HOUSING NEEDS AND RURAL RESETTLEMENT APPEARS TO BE
MOVING AHEAD AS RAPIDLY AS POSSIBLE CONSIDERING ACUTE
LAND SHORTAGE IN KENYA.
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